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**JOURNAL OF THE  
BARBER COIN COLLECTORS' SOCIETY**

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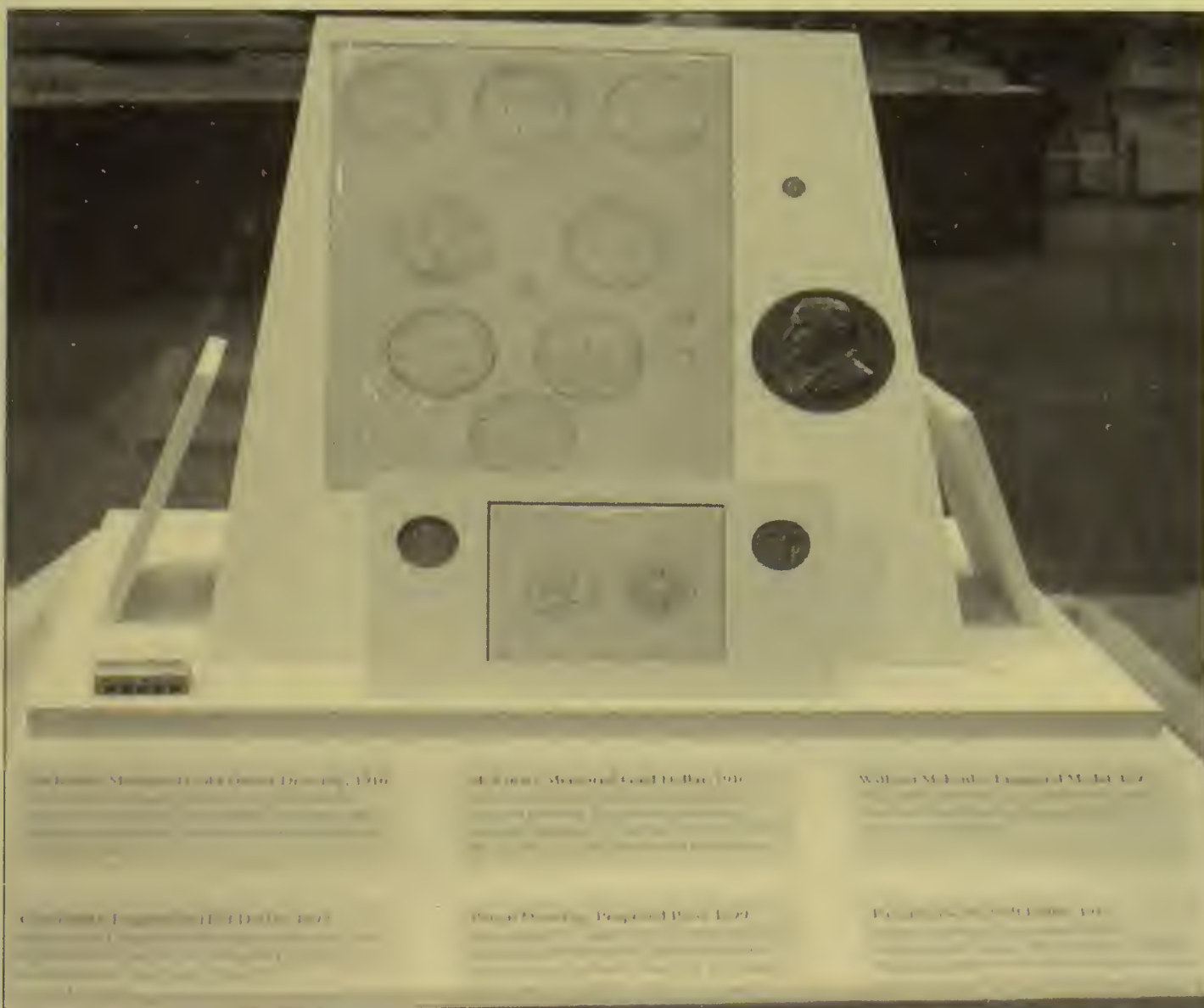
Volume 18

Number 2



**2007**

**Rare Barber Patterns on Display at FUN**

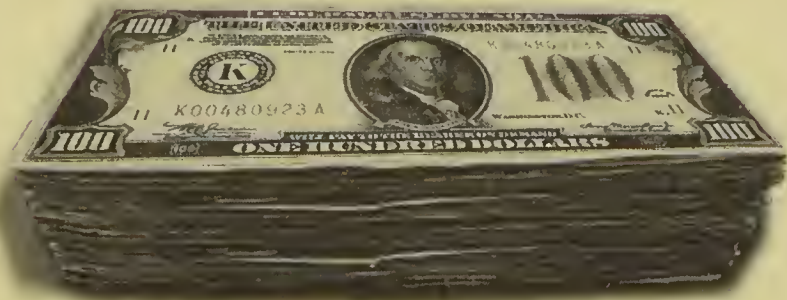


**NNC exhibit of patterns and sketches created by Charles Barber**

**See pages 16-17**

*Photo courtesy of John Frost*

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JOURNAL OF THE  
BARBER COIN COLLECTORS' SOCIETY

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Founded in 1989 by Steve Epstein  
ANA Club Member C-146266

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### CONTENTS

Page 4.....BCCS President's Message  
Page 5.....BCCS Editor's Message  
Page 6....."Barber Quarter Dollars: Part 2, Mint Mark Positions and Reverse Varieties 1892 - 1900" by William Cowburn  
Page 12...."Proper Storage and Handling of Coins" by Elliot S. Goldman  
Page 13....Barber Bits  
Page 16...."Rare Barber Patterns on Display at F.U.N." by John Frost  
Page 18...."Found Treasures: 1904-S Half Dollar" by Stewart Huckaby  
Page 20...."1913 Barber Half Distinguished by Low Prices" by Paul M. Green  
Page 22....Barber Coin Collectors' Society Bylaws





## BCCS PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Welcome to the second and Summer 2007 issue of the Barber Journal.

The following may be a bit premature but there won't be another opportunity to mention ANA items before the summer is well on its way. First, the ANA Convention ("World Fair of Money") will be held in Milwaukee, August 8-12 at the Midwest Airlines Center. The Barber Collectors' Society will hold its annual meeting on Saturday, August 11 at 9:30 AM in Room 101D. You will find another prominent notice of this meeting elsewhere in this issue and in the ANA Convention schedule. If you are a BCCS member or collect Barber coins, this meeting (really, a gathering and open discussion on any topic) is worth it!

This seems to be the proper place to make my standard pitch for individuals to attend the ANA summertime convention. Milwaukee is reasonably located if you live in the Midwest. It has a long history of hosting numismatic shows, including several ANA conventions. Finally, an ANA show is a 'big league' event relative to an experience at a local or state show. Essentially, you will find hundreds of dealers, unparalleled competitive exhibits and educational talks from 9AM to 5PM each day.

I hope to meet old and new friends, recruit some new members and enjoy this summer highlight. See you there!

The other ANA item concerns those of us who are members and the current election of officers. The contested positions are those of Governor where sixteen (16) candidates are running. If one reads the numismatic press, the ANA is a hot topic. Three Governors are running for reelection, two candidates are former governors, and the remaining persons are new. (One odd fact is all candidates are male.) Several of the new candidates are well-known persons in the hobby with active roles as ANA supporters who, until this time, have never run for an ANA office. The Barber Society nominated Joseph Boling and Clifford Mishler based on their request for this support. I intend to maintain my impartiality here but would encourage our members who are ANA members to consider all candidates and vote carefully.

Numismatic regards,  
*Phil Carrigan*  
Philrph1892@cs.com



## BCCS EDITOR'S MESSAGE

I found this issue of the *Journal* exceptionally interesting and hope you will too. I was intrigued by the photos of BCCS member Michael Kennedy's 1900 Barber Dime with lines from an American Civil War poem etched on the reverse. (The entire poem can be found on several Internet websites.)

Dan Cassin and Thomas Robertson sent in their coins to be photographed. My husband Brian had a difficult time tilting Dan's 1907-O Half under the microscope at just the right angle to make the 'O' appear to vanish, but to the naked eye all it took was a simple tilt and it was gone. I had a great time trying it from every conceivable angle. Thomas Robertson's 1906-O Dime may or may not be a RPM. Perhaps you can shed some light on this one.

By the time Bill Cowburn finishes his series on the 1892-1900 Quarter mintmarks and reverse varieties, we will all be proficient at identifying them. After reading his current segment, I just had to search through an old coin catalogue for photos of Barber quarters to see if I could label each mintmark correctly.

Many thanks to these members for sharing their coins with us and to John Frost for giving us a glimpse at the Barber patterns exhibit which was displayed at this year's F.U.N. Show.

I hope this issue inspires you to consider sharing your collections or collecting adventures and experiences with your fellow Society members by way of an article, letter or photo. The *Journal* is always in need of material. I look forward to hearing from you.

Have an enjoyable, safe summer.

### THE JOURNAL NEEDS YOUR ARTICLES!

Your article submission(s) automatically enters you in the BCCS Literary Contest. The article receiving the most member votes will win a 1st place prize of \$50. Second place prize will be \$25 and third place will be a free one year BCCS membership. So, make sure your membership is up to date and get your article to Eileen at the post office or e-mail address on page 3.

**DEADLINE FOR THE NEXT ISSUE IS September 1st**



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# Barber Quarter Dollars: Part 2

## Mint Mark Positions & Reverse Varieties

### 1892 – 1900

by **William Cowburn**

In the first installment of this article, the discussion focused on the differences in the three types of reverses used on Barber quarters and the relative scarcity of the 1892 issues with Type 1 reverses compared to Type 2 reverses. This installment will look at the changes in mintmark position from 1892 through 1897 and the relative scarcity of major mintmark placements when more than one position is available for a single year.

During 1892, the mintmark was far to the left as discussed in the previous installment. That mintmark position (far left) was not used again in this coin series. Beginning in 1893, the mintmark position was moved to either a 'Center' or a 'Far Right' position for both New Orleans and San Francisco issues. Some dies had the mintmark punched in the 'Center' position while other dies had the mintmark punched into the 'Far Right' position.



*1892 S AU55 is an example of the mintmark 'Far Left.'*

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Which years had both mintmark positions available? Which positions are scarce when both are available? Why were the mintmarks moved to these new positions and when did the changing positions finally end? This installment will look at those questions and attempt to answer them.

As mentioned in the first installment of this article, the 'Far Left' mintmark position used in 1892 left very little room for the mint worker to hand punch the mintmark into the die. This is because the space between the bottom of the eagle's tail feathers and the top of the letter 'R' in the word QUARTER was the most confined area on the reverse of the quarter dollar to place the mintmark.

It seemed that better locations were available to the right of that original mintmark position, but how far to the right should the mintmark go? In 1893 the US Mint began punching the mintmark into the area centered above the space between the 'R' in QUARTER and the 'D' in DOLLAR. They also began punching the mintmark in a 'Far Right' position above the 'D' in DOLLAR. It was not until 1898 that the mintmark position finally remained in the 'Center' position above the space between the 'R' in QUARTER and the 'D' in DOLLAR.

Of course, all of this moving the major positioning of the mintmark created additional varieties for us to collect today. The 1893-O and the 1893-S quarters each have examples available with the mintmark in the 'Center' position as well as the 'Far Right' position. Several other dates through 1897 also have these additional varieties available to expand our collections. Let's look at each date and see how available these different positions are relative to each other.

Please keep in mind that this article is generally examining the major mintmark positions and not necessarily focusing on all of the smaller differences in mintmark location. After all, these mintmarks were punched into the dies by hand, so minor variances in the locations of the mintmark are normal and natural. This discussion will generally deal with only the major differences in position, although the author will note some of the minor differences that he found of interest.

The author again conducted research using the Heritage Auction Galleries "Auction Archive" to review as many coins as possible that have been sold over the past 10 years. All 1893 through 1899 Barber Quarter Dollars have the Type 2 reverse, but many of these years are available with the mintmark either centered or to the far right. For those counted in the 'Far Right' position, the author included coins with the mintmark partly over the 'D' as well as those that were fully over the 'D.' For those counted in the 'Center' position, in some cases the mintmark will be close to the 'R' and in some cases the mintmark will be close to the 'D' instead of strictly centered. A detailed examination of the breakdown can be found at the end of this article in the Table.



## 1893 Mintmark Positions

Sixty examples of the 1893 New Orleans issue were found with about 1 out of every 4 having the mintmark centered. Almost 75% of the 1893-O coins examined have the mintmark in the far right position. Of the coins with the mintmark in the far right position, slightly more than half have the mintmark completely over the 'D' while slightly less than half have the mintmark only partially over the 'D' (see photos).



*1893-O is an example of the mintmark far right and fully over the 'D.'*



*1894-O is an example of the mintmark far right and partially over the 'D.'*





*1898-S is an example of the mintmark in the Center position*

The 1893 San Francisco issue is slightly scarcer in the archives with only 42 issues being examined. The breakdown between the center position and the far right position is almost even with a slight bias favoring the far right position.

### **1894 Mintmark Positions**

The New Orleans issue is scarce with only 31 showing in Heritage Auction Archives. Approximately 1 out of every 4 have the mintmark in the 'Center' position. Of the almost 75% that have the mintmark to the 'Far Right,' almost half of those have the mintmark partially over the 'D' with the other half completely over the 'D.'

The San Francisco issue is generally more available than the New Orleans coin this year with 61 1894-S coins making it to the author's survey. Approximately 1/3 of the coins have the mintmark in the 'Center' position and 2/3 have the mintmark in the 'Far Right' position.

### **1895 Mintmark Positions**

The total number of coins examined really drops off for this date. The archives only show 35 unique 1895-O quarters of which approximately 2/3 have the mintmark in the 'Center' position. With only 1/3 of this issue having the mintmark in the 'Far Right' position, perhaps you are thinking that the US Mint was moving towards that standard 'Centered' position that we will find in a couple of years. However, take a look at the San Francisco issues and you will find that the

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‘Far Right’ position has not been abandoned quite yet.

The 1895-S only had 28 examples in the Heritage Auction Archives with photos to examine. Of those, less than 20% had the mintmark in the ‘Center’ location. More than 4 out of every 5 1895-S quarters had the mintmark in the ‘Far Right’ location. This is a scarce coin in general that has an even more difficult variety for those who are looking for them – the mintmark in the center.

### **1896 Mintmark Positions**

All 1896-O and 1896-S quarters examined have the mintmark in the ‘Center’ position. The 1896-S is known with only 2 different reverse dies – on one the mintmark is slightly closer to the ‘R’ than the other, but both dies have the mintmark in that general ‘Center’ position. Of note might be the relative scarcity of the 1896-O compared to the 1896-S. While the 1896-S is considered one of the big three in the series, the 1896-O appears at auction far less frequently than does the 1896-S. The archives show the 1896-S 126 times and the 1896-O only 54 times. Of course, that could merely be a function of the higher price for the 1896-S bringing more of them out into the auction environment compared to the 1896-O.

### **1897 Mintmark Positions**

This is the last year that we find Barber Quarters with the mintmark in the ‘Far Right’ position. However, it is interesting how different the positions used at the New Orleans Mint were compared to the San Francisco Mint in 1897.

The 1897-O issues that have been examined all have the mintmark in the ‘Center’ position. The 1897-S issues have the vast majority of the mintmarks in the ‘Far Right’ position. In fact, the First Edition of *The Complete Guide to Barber Quarters* listed this issue as only having the mintmark in the ‘Far Right’ position. A few 1897-S quarters have been found with the mintmark in the ‘Center’ position, but most of those are low grade examples.

The Barber Quarter Census published in Volume 17 Number 3 of the *Journal* of the Barber Coin Collectors’ Society would seem to indicate that about 10% of the 1897-S quarters have the mintmark in the ‘Center’ position. However, that number seems a bit high in relation to what the author has been able to find. In Heritage Auction Archives, only one 1897-S out of 29 unique coins has the mintmark in the ‘Center’ position. Stated another way, the Heritage Auction Archives have just over 3% of their total 1897-S quarters with a mintmark in the ‘Center’ position.



Of course, the coins in Heritage’s auctions generally have a higher grade than what shows in the club’s census. The median grade in the Heritage Auction Archives is EF40, while the median grade in the census is around G4. The author also examined eBay to see what positions were found for sale on that site. Of 27 1897-S quarters examined, 2 had the mintmark in the ‘Center’ position – a little over 7% of the sample. The median grade of the coins from eBay was G4. While higher grade examples of the 1897-S with ‘Center’ mintmark are quite elusive, it seems that a collector can find an example in Good or Very Good with a little searching.

The data presented in the Table below only includes information from Heritage Auction Archives and does not use the additional information gathered from other sources for the 1897-S. Next time, we will examine the relative rarity of the Type 2 and Type 3 examples of Barber quarters from the year 1900 as well as some of the other varieties available from 1892 through 1900 that can add spice to your collection.

TABLE – MINTMARK POSITIONS 1893 THROUGH 1897

1893-O	Center	16 Coins	26.7% of 1893-O	Median Grade MS61
1893-O	Far Right	44 Coins	73.3% of 1893-O	Median Grade MS62
1893-S	Center	19 Coins	45.2% of 1893-S	Median Grade MS61
1893-S	Far Right	23 Coins	54.8% of 1893-S	Median Grade AU55
1894-O	Center	8 Coins	25.8% of 1894-O	Median Grade AU58
1894-O	Far Right	23 Coins	74.2% of 1894-O	Median Grade AU58
1894-S	Center	20 Coins	32.8% of 1894-S	Median Grade MS61
1894-S	Far Right	41 Coins	67.2% of 1894-S	Median Grade MS61
1895-O	Center	24 Coins	68.6% of 1895-O	Median Grade MS62
1895-O	Far Right	11 Coins	31.4% of 1895-O	Median Grade MS64
1895-S	Center	5 Coins	17.9% of 1895-S	Median Grade MS64
1895-S	Far Right	23 Coins	82.1% of 1895-S	Median Grade AU55
1896-O	Center	54 Coins	100% of 1896-O	Median Grade AU53
1896-S	Center	126 Coins	100% of 1896-S	Median Grade VG8
1897-O	Center	47 Coins	100% of 1897-O	Median Grade AU58
1897-S	Center	1 Coin	3.4% of 1897-S	
1897-S	Far Right	28 Coins	96.6% of 1897-S	Median Grade EF40

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*Editor's note: Some topics are timeless. Some articles are timely. Occasionally, as space allows, we reprint articles from past Journals which we feel will be of interest to our newer members. This article is reprinted from the Vol. 1, No. 3 Journal, Fall 1989, pp. 24-25. It is originally from "Uncommon Cents," published by The San Diego Show, Inc., June '89.*

# Proper Storage and Handling of Coins!

by **Elliot S. Goldman**

People spend lots of money on coins. Dealers sell lots of coins to individuals. What's wrong with the above statements? Nothing, except that the majority of those purchased coins will be ruined, due to improper handling and storage.

To properly store your coins, there are certain things to avoid at all costs: staples, cardboard holders, PVC (polyvinyl chloride), talking while holding a coin in your hand, and touching a coin anywhere but on the edges. I will cover these one at a time.

**STAPLES:** I guarantee that if you constantly use 2x2 cardboard holders that are held together by staples, you are going to put a staple scratch on one of your coins. Even if you don't, why take a chance? Many people store coins in 2x2 boxes that hold the cardboard flips. There's always the chance that the points of a staple at the back of one flip can scratch the obverse of the coin in the holder behind it. How many of you have seen really nice coins, but noticed a staple scratch on that coin, and have thought to yourself, "What a shame?" How do you think that scratch got there? Staples!!

**CARDBOARD HOLDERS:** Besides needing staples to hold cardboard holders together, cardboard itself is a problem. Cardboard means cardboard dust. Have you ever seen a copper or nickel coin with a black spot? That spot very often is caused by a speck of cardboard dust. A single speck of dust left on a coin for six months to a year will cause such a spot which can't be removed. How would you like to spend \$1,000 on a coin and a year later find that the coin is worth only \$300 because it now has a black spot on it?

**POLYVINYL CHLORIDE:** PVC is a chemical compound which softens plastic. It helps to make plastic coin holders (or flips) more durable and able to lie down nice and flat in showcases. Unfortunately, the PVC in the plastic breaks down and puts a nice, green slime on the coin, which then eats away at the luster and metal of the coin. Even if the coin is kept in "Kointain" before it is put into the flip, the PVC emits a hydrochloric acid. No need to ask me what acid does! Why would



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anyone think of using such holders? Because they're easier to handle or people just don't know the consequences.

**TALKING WHILE HOLDING A COIN IN YOUR HAND:** When you talk, you give off microscopic bits of spittle. If you talk over a copper coin, a year later you will see lots of black "flyspecks" on the coin. However, collectors buy copper coins all the time without knowing how they were handled before buying them.

**HANDLING A COIN ANYWHERE BUT ON THE EDGES:** Many individuals, including dealers who should know better, will touch a coin on areas other than the edges. If not remedied, in about six months a fingerprint will appear on the coin which will never come off. Be very careful when handling coins.

By now you are probably asking yourself, "How do I know if my coins are contaminated; how should I store them?" The answers are very easy. If you don't know whether they've been contaminated, there is a chemical available named Trichlorotrifluoroethane (commonly called "Dissolve"). Through careful use, "Dissolve" can remove many of these contaminants without hurting toning or luster.

The best way to store coins is to avoid all of the above "don'ts." Use holders that are totally inert. There are mylar flips that contain no PVC and hard lucite holders that are good, but more expensive.

Remember, besides protecting your investment, you have an obligation to yourself and future owners to hand the coin down to future generations in the same condition in which you received it.



## Barber Bits

I want to thank you, the BCCS officers, and the editorial staff, for the check that I received for first place in the 2006 BCCS Literary Contest. Considering all of the other wonderful articles that were written, I also want to thank my fellow BCCS members who voted for my article. Each quarter, I eagerly anticipate the arrival of the new BCCS Journal in the mail. I love reading all the interesting articles about Barber coins and writing an occasional article for the journal makes the whole experience even more pleasurable. Thanks again everyone.

Sincerely,  
Dan Flood

### 1900 Barber Dime Curiosity



*The exact words illustrated are “‘twill live in song and story, Though its folds are in the dust”*

I came across this 1900 Barber dime that has two lines from a Confederate States of America poem engraved on the reverse. The wordage is from the poem “The Conquered Banner” by Abram Joseph Ryan (1838-1886). I’m guessing that this coin was sold as a keepsake from one of the CSA reunions, maybe the 1905 (the 40th) or 1915 (the 50th) reunion for the Civil War army veterans. I know that the CSA veterans met in New Orleans in 1905. I’m still researching where the 50th reunion was. I have heard through another source that keepsakes, sometimes coins, were sold.

Was this coin in circulation for five years or fifteen before it found its way to the engraver? The answer is not conclusive, merely a guess.

I would grade the coin VG based on the fact that only a few letters are visible in the band on Liberty’s head.

I was wondering if the club has any information regarding this type of inscription on a Barber coin. Any help would be appreciated.

Submitted by Michael E. Kennedy

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BCCS member John Norden asks, does anyone have any information about the 1893/2 Dime? He can find very little written about it.



Now you see it



Now you don't



The 1907-O has the weakest mintmark strike for that series. This particular 1907-O Barber Half Dollar in VF sports such a weakly struck 'O' that, when viewed with the naked eye and tilted at just the right angle, it gives the illusion of disappearing.

Submitted by Dan Cassin

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## RPM or Strike Doubling?

This 1906-O Barber Dime was purchased as a repunched mintmark from a local Iowa dealer several months ago. Brian Ribar, who photographed it, is 95% certain that it is *not* one. The fact that the NW spread seen on the 'O' mintmark also shows on the nearby ribbon has him 95% sure that it is strike/mechanical doubling. The coin is quite worn, making an accurate attribution difficult. The only way to determine definitely whether it is a RPM or strike doubling is to examine a higher grade example. If you have any information or insight to add about this or the other coins mentioned, please send it to Eileen by email or surface mail.



Submitted by Thomas D. Robertson



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# Rare Barber Patterns on Display at FUN

by **John Frost**

During the 2007 FUN Show in Orlando, the Smithsonian's National Numismatic Collection (NNC) presented an exhibit of patterns and sketches created by Charles Barber. The purpose of the exhibit was to both display the original sketches and patterns themselves, and also to educate the public about how design ideas evolve through the process of becoming coins. According to NNC Curator Jim Hughes, these patterns have never before been on public display. Several of these patterns are extremely rare, and despite some of them being pictured in publications over the years, this was the first time the public has had an opportunity to see the actual items themselves.

The most notable items on display were the 1891 Barber Half Patterns. Just two are known (both in the NNC) and both were exhibited, giving views of both the obverse and reverse. The 1891 Pattern Half featured the same design as adopted for the regular issue the following year, but the original reverse featured a smaller eagle enclosed within a wreath, with clouds among the stars above the eagle. The regular issue featured the large eagle, no wreath, and no clouds.



*Pattern-50C-1891 Half Dollar obverse and Pattern-50C-1891 Half Dollar reverse*

Another exceedingly rare pattern was the 1891 Standing Liberty design with a liberty cap, along with rays and an eagle on the obverse. Other patterns on display included five pattern nickels, most notably the popular 1882 Liberty Nickel, which bore the design adopted the following year for the production issue. Some of the other nickel patterns included commemorative issues featuring George Washington, and also a Shield with a Liberty ribbon. The popular Columbian Half (which became a real coin) was also featured.



*Photo on right: the 1891 Standing Liberty design with a liberty cap, along with rays and an eagle on the obverse.*



*Photo lower left: the 1882 Liberty Nickel bearing the design adopted the following year for the production issue.*



Original Barber sketches of the McKinley Birthplace commemorative dollar and an 1899 Columbian pattern Peso for Puerto Rico (shown) rounded out the exhibit.



All in all, the exhibit provided the general public with some insights into the process of creating designs for potential use in our country's coinage, some of which end up being adopted, and some which are not. But for Barber collectors, it was the first time we were actually able to lay our eyes on some of the very rare patterns which resulted in the series that we collect today.

More photos (and in color) will soon be posted on the BCCS website, [www.BarberCoins.org](http://www.BarberCoins.org).



## Found Treasures: 1904-S Half Dollar

by **Stewart Huckaby**

During the course of my day to day job, one of the things I enjoy is the opportunity to chat with our customers, and while I enjoy teaching people about coins, auctions, and how the website and bidding process works, it is also a pleasure when I get a chance to learn something new. This morning, one of our more observant long-time customers called about some questions he had about the website, and after we had resolved his question, he started to talk about some of the research he'd done while determining his bids for the upcoming Long Beach Signature Auction.

This gentleman is in the habit of trading coins in order to upgrade his collection, often trading a common coin for a rarer one, and we pretty much see eye to eye about what coins are common and which are rare. You can almost always find a 1909-S VDB Cent for a price, for example, as well as pieces like the 1916-D Mercury Dime and the 1916 Standing Liberty Quarter. Especially if you look in a Heritage Signature Auction catalog. But some coins are a little tougher to find than you might think.

The piece this gentleman mentioned to me was the 1904-S Half Dollar. It's a low mintage coin, but a lot of Barber Halves are, and this coin ranks only eighth in the series as far as low mintage pieces go. It's not something that's expensive in all grades; the 2006 *Red Book* lists it at \$25 in Good-4, for example, and other current guides range from \$25 to \$40 in the same grade. I own one. I have not looked at the coin recently (although that may be on my to do list the next time I have my collection out), but Good-4 would probably be a safe bet for its grade. Given the quality of material or general lack thereof in my collection, the coin can't possibly be all that rare in an absolute sense.

Or can it? There is no question that the 1904-S Half Dollar is the key to the Barber Half Dollar series in high grades, as it is valued more highly in any grade of XF or better than the 1892 Micro-O. The *Red Book* value for this coin in MS60 is a hardly trivial \$6,000, and I believe that such a coin, if offered at auction, would likely top that by at least 20%. The piece pictured above, an MS67



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which we offered in the last FUN auction, brought \$92,000. Yet, although there is clearly some condition rarity involved with this coin, it doesn't have the notoriety of some of the condition rarities in, for example, the Walking Liberty Half Dollar and Morgan Dollar series.

However, what this gentleman pointed out that impressed me is that Heritage has offered very few of these over the years. A quick look through the Permanent Auction Archives shows that Heritage has offered only 28 of these coins in any grade in any auction since April of 1994. Certainly, this result is going to be skewed a bit from the emphasis that Heritage places on high end coins for Signature Auctions, yet even a Very Good piece, possibly even a Good, would not be out of place in an Exclusively Internet auction.

The major grading services, combined, have certified fewer than 100 of these coins... in **all** grades. In contrast, according to their website NGC alone has certified 313 1916 Standing Liberty Quarters, 180 1916-D Mercury Dimes, 399 1889-CC dollars, and over 2,000 1909-S VDB cents in uncirculated grades alone. Needless to say, the figures above include resubmissions and don't take into account problem coins that may have been certified by ANA or slabbed by NCS.

So is this a truly rare coin? I really don't know, although its presence in my collection implies that it's not. The Barber Half Dollar series is not as popular a series as Morgan Dollars or anything minted exclusively in the 20th Century, so the coin's relatively low prices in most grades may simply be a function of low demand. But you might just keep a look out for one of these coins. Who knows - there may be some potential...



## Barber Coin Collectors' Society Annual ANA Meeting

Saturday, August 11, 2007

9:30 a.m. Room 101D

Midwest Airlines Convention Center

Milwaukee, WI

# 1913 Barber Half Distinguished by Low Prices

by **Paul M. Green**

Mintage figures are not perfect guides to price for many reasons. Sometimes low-mintage coins were heavily saved when they were released, as was the case with the 1931-S Lincoln cent or 1950-D Jefferson nickel. Other times, low-mintage figures do not result in high prices simply because there are few collectors, as in the case of a Seated Liberty half dime or a two-cent piece.

In the case of the 1913 Barber half dollar, it is hard to pin down why the prices are not higher. The 1913 Barber half dollar is not overlooked, at least by half dollar collectors. It was the first of three straight low-mintage Philadelphia Barber half dollars. It was quite a string, especially considering they came from the main Philadelphia facility, which is not normally associated with low mintages in the 1900s.

The 1913 Barber half was the first to appear with a mintage of just 188,627. It was followed in 1914 with a Philadelphia half of just 124,610 mintage, and then in 1915 came a mintage of just 138,450. Half dollar collectors must have been in a state of disbelief, with branch mintages higher than the ones from Philadelphia.

We cannot be sure how heavily the three half dollars were saved. Collecting interest was probably higher than at any time prior to 1913, as there had been one design change after another for a number of years. Moreover, the changes had produced some exciting coins like the 1909-S VDB Lincoln cent.

How much of that interest would have an impact on the saving of the 1913 half dollar is another matter. There should have been some interest, but a half dollar in 1913 was a lot of money. Moreover, even though the Barber had a low mintage, the 1913-S quarter had a mintage of just 40,000. If you were a young collector at the time and had just a half dollar to spend, two 1913-S quarters would seem like the better choice if you were interested in future prices.

If we look at prices today, we see the 1913 Barber half dollar at just \$23 in G-4 and \$34 in VG-8. It jumps to \$115 in F-12 and is \$670 in AU-50. It is \$925 in MS-60 and \$4,100 in MS-65. Those prices are awfully reasonable for a coin of



the 20th century with a mintage of less than 200,000 pieces.

To explain today's prices requires additional digging. The New York Subway Hoard purchased by Littleton years ago is a good starting point. It was started in the 1940s and contained key and semi-key dates of assorted denominations. The hoard contained 29 1913 half dollars, along with 25 dated 1914 and 36 dated 1915. Even with a very low mintage, all three were still circulating into the 1940s and perhaps beyond.

Another twist is the 627 proofs of the 1913. It is not a large total, but the presence of them, currently priced at \$3,800 - \$300 less than a MS-65 - does present collectors simply wanting a top-grade 1913 with an option to an MS-65. If you happen to want a top-quality 1913 and have \$4,000 to spend, you can opt for either a proof or a business strike.

Based on its small price movements since 1998, the 1913 seems to be stable. It commands premiums in all grades, but is not a very expensive Barber half dollar in MS-60 or MS-65. Its MS-65 price is actually below average.

It appears the supply shortage of 1913 Barber half dollars is in classic collector grades, but perhaps it is demand, as collectors know a good buy when they see one and with its mintage, the 1913 is a good buy, even if there is no real explanation for its low prices.

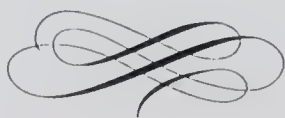
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*Editor's note: The following chart gives a comparison of the prices quoted for the dates, mintmarks, and grades mentioned in Paul Green's Feb. 17, 2004 article and those given in the June 2007 Numismatic News "Coin Market."*

February 2004 article		June 2007 "Coin Market"
1913	in G-4 - \$23.00	\$75.00
	in VG-8 - \$34.00	\$90.00
	in F-12 - \$115.00	\$235.00
	in AU-50 - \$670.00	\$850.00
	in MS-60 - \$925.00	\$1150.00
	in MS-65 - \$4100.00	\$4850.00
	in Proof - \$3800.00	Prf-65 - \$3800.00

# Barber Coin Collectors' Society Bylaws

1. Promotes the writing and sharing of information on Barber coins to an organization of individuals who are interested in increasing their knowledge of the series; for Society purposes, Barber coins are defined as primarily U.S. dimes, quarters and half dollars designed by Charles E. Barber and minted from 1892 to 1916.
2. Gives Barber hobbyists an opportunity to contact other collectors with similar numismatic interests.
3. Can promote consistent grading standards among collectors, dealers, society members and non-members alike.
4. Through group purchasing power, can offer its members discounts on numismatic materials relating especially to the collecting of Barber coins.
5. Provides members a means to trade their Barbers with other members, in an effort to upgrade or complete their collection.
6. Effectively lobbies numismatic shows and events to provide Barber exhibits and space for all Barber dealers to sell their merchandise.
7. Promotes the collecting of Barbers and the hobby in general to today's youngsters.
8. Offers benefit to all Barber collectors, whether they collect Barber dimes, quarters or halves, graded AG or MS65+.
9. Makes sure its members have a say in the organization.
10. Is a not-for-profit organization dedicated solely to the benefit of its members and those who assist the Society in advancing its purpose.





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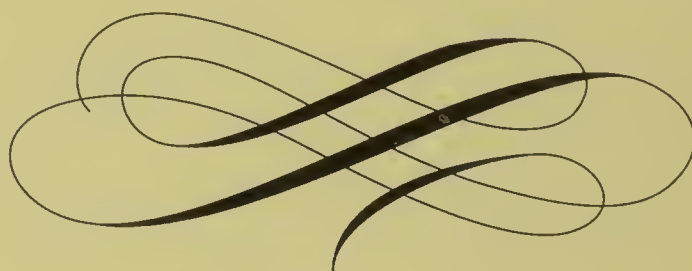
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